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USAID URBAN GARDENS PROGRAM

2010-2011 WORK PLAN



November 2010

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USAID URBAN GARDENS PROGRAM

2010-2011 WORK PLAN

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Cover photo – School Visit, Addis Ababa, October, 2010, by Kate Ogorzaly

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|---|
| ART | Anti-retroviral Therapies |
| CSPP | Community Schools Partnership Program |
| DCOP | Deputy Chief of Party |
| ERA | Environmental Resource Adviser |
| EO | Extension Officer |
| GIS | Geospatial Information Systems |
| GSLA | Group Savings and Loan Association |
| HAPCO | HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office |
| HEW | Health Extension Worker |
| IEE | Initial Environment Evaluation |
| IP | Implementing Partner |
| MFI | Microfinance Institution |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |
| OAC | Operational Area Coordinator |
| OVC | Orphans and Vulnerable Children |
| PC3 | Positive Change: Child, Communities and Care Program |
| PEPFAR | President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief |
| SACCO | Savings and Credit Cooperative |
| TSEHAI | Technical Support for the Ethiopian HIV Aids ART Initiative |
| UAPHAW | Urban Agriculture Program for HIV/AIDS Affected Women |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| VCT | Voluntary Counseling and Testing |

NARRATIVE: YEAR 3 WORK PLAN

OVERVIEW OF THE URBAN GARDENS PROGRAM

Awarded in September 2008, the USAID Urban Gardens Program for HIV-Affected Women and Children improves household income and nutrition through the creation of school and community gardens, the provision of agriculture-related education, tools and inputs, and access to HIV/AIDS care and nutritional and health education and services. The core technical support is focused on providing cutting edge training in gardening for HIV affected orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and caregivers. Additionally, gardeners receive other important technical support in irrigation methods, crop maintenance, pest management, the marketing of their produce, basic household nutrition, and the creation of informal group savings and loan associations (GSLAs). Beneficiary gardeners also receive direct technical and financial support for one year before graduating from the program. Upon graduation they are able to continue cultivation on the land made available by local municipalities, serve as community garden champions and may continue to access and receive peripheral support from other elements of the program such as health service referrals and GSLAs. Since its inception, the USAID Urban Gardens Program has reached a total of 14,454 HIV-affected households, providing support to 44,625 orphans and vulnerable children (OVC)¹.

The program has been able to scale up due to the presence and hard work of local NGO Implementing Partners (IPs) through which the program links to beneficiary gardeners. Supported technically by Urban Garden Program field based Operational Area Coordinators (OACs) and financially by targeted grant support, each NGO partner's Extension Officers oversee day-to-day gardening activities, train and mentor gardeners, and link beneficiaries to other value added health, education and social services provided in the community.

In April 2010 the USAID Urban Gardens Program worked with USAID to accelerate its program to reach additional cities, and beneficiary gardeners earlier in Year 3. In October 2010, USAID provided additional funding and extend the contract period an additional year to expand further. In doing, so, the Urban Gardens Program will work total of 50 IPs in 20 cities, with plans to reach more than 111,625 OVC and 29,868 households by project end in September 2012.

PROGRAM PLANS FOR YEAR 3

The Program begins Year 3 with plans to expand scale and deepen scope. Below are lessons learned that will guide the program through the remaining two years:

- Local NGO IPs hold the necessary links and knowledge of the community. The recruitment of the appropriate NGOs takes approximately 3 months and requires a well structured partner selection and grants process followed by a sensitization workshop that aims at mutual understanding;
- To maximize effectiveness of knowledge transfer, and ensure long term adoption and sustainability of the gardening methodology the program has to continue to incorporate

¹ These statistics are as of August 2010. Registrations are currently being done of new gardens based on grants made in August 2010.

more participatory adult learning training methods that focus on empowerment rather than direct, rote technology transfer;

- With creativity, innovation and a greater emphasis on micro gardening at the OVC household level, there is untapped potential to extend gardening to reach more children and their families;
- Expanding links to and engaging mayors, government agencies and other stakeholders into a broader policy dialogue-- particularly around improved urban agriculture policies at the city level -- will ensure long term access for HIV affected and other vulnerable populations to necessary land and water resources, which is critical as cities continue to grow at high rate;.
- Facilitating additional and permanent access to community based technical service support is critical to ensuring that regular and specialized technical support reaches gardens and gardeners over the long term. This support will continue to promote both self sufficiency and sustainability of urban gardens after the program ends;
- As the scale of the program grows, there is a need for greater standardization, systemization and quality control, as well as greater decentralization of key functions such as training, procurement and monitoring of gardens. This standardized yet decentralized approach will allow the program to reach more gardeners, and increasingly build capacity and empower IPs, their staff and the gardeners.
- Nutrition outcomes — particularly ones linked to agriculture and increased production — are difficult to measure. There is a need to better understand the links between agriculture and nutrition, particularly for subsistence-level gardeners, and understand the appropriate means to measure them without undermining program goals surrounding self sufficiency and empowerment.

Year 3 will build upon the lessons learned described above. In addition, Year 3 will focus on two key themes until program close:

- **Linkages and Partnerships.** The Urban Gardens Program will continue to forge more formal links with local government and civil society organizations to support agricultural, health and educational aspects of the program going forward and ensure long-term sustainability; and
- **Measuring Impact.** The program will undertake greater analysis of impact through targeted studies that assess the program's ability to improve nutrition and income of its beneficiaries.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS WORK PLAN

The following pages lay out the work plan for October 2010 through September 2011. The work plan is organized in six component sections and also includes updates on program management, new staff hires and planned short term consultancies for the first half of the program Year 3. Annex 1 contains a Gantt chart of all activities planned for the project as well as an estimated timeline for its roll out.

COMPONENT 1: TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY GROUP AND SCHOOL-BASED URBAN GARDENS

1.1 BUILD LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM IN OPERATIONAL AREAS

The USAID Urban Gardens Program focuses on community group gardens and school gardens. By working in groups, beneficiaries are able to support and learn from each other. Establishing partnerships with local governments, local NGOs and other influential parties in cities will continue to be a key component of the USAID Urban Gardens Program to facilitate access to resources for beneficiaries. These partnerships are especially important in securing a commitment from the local government for long term land use for gardens.

Given the absence of private land in Ethiopia, the project, under the leadership of the Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) and the Operational Area Coordinators (OACs), work directly with local government leaders, particularly mayors, to identify appropriate land for communal group gardens. Over the next year, USAID Urban Garden Program will develop MOUs with government offices and schools. The MOUs with the government will identify focal persons from the Ministry of Agriculture, Education and Health's offices in each city who will provide training during the program operation and provide technical assistance when the program ends. For local office of agriculture, MOUs will place on emphasis on access to technical resources, as well as access to suitable lands, water and environmental tests. The MOUs with the local education offices will ensure their continued involvement in identifying schools with large groups of OVC who need additional income and/or nutrition support and ensure that schools will a lot land to gardens. The MOUs with local schools will seek to ensure that school environmental and HIV/AIDS committees will support the OVC gardening programs going forward.

The USAID Urban Gardens Program will continue to work with the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (HAPCO), health extension workers (HEWs), other PEPFAR partners, and community based health outreach services. When possible the USAID UGP will build on the work of projects like IYCN that are providing nutrition training to HEWs. In Addis Ababa and Adama, special nutrition training by IYCN will be provided to the USAID UGP extension officers and directly to beneficiaries.

1.2 CREATE AWARENESS FOR PROGRAM EXPANSION: NEW CITIES, TARGETS AND LOCATIONS

Since program inception DAI has worked with 41 IPs in 16 cities². In 2011 USAID Urban Gardens Program will reach out to additional beneficiaries in the two remaining grant cycles using two methodologies. First, when possible, existing IPs with the capacity to expand operations in existing or new cities will be given additional funding to do so. USAID Urban Gardens Program will also be recruiting for 9 additional NGO partners as we expand to new cities in January 2011. Second, a big emphasis of the program will be on maximizing the program's existing work with schools to ensure that more OVC are reached. An OVC/school capacity building specialist will be hired in November to oversee and innovate new approaches for expanding the program's support to OVC as well as to build and maintain relationships with principals and the local government education offices.

YEAR 3 CITIES OF OPERATION

August 2010

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| Addis Ababa | Dessie |
| Adama | Kombolcha |
| Debre Zeit | Assosa |
| Hawassa | Gondar |
| Shashemene | Bahir Dar |
| Debre Markos | Woldiya |
| Adwa | Woliso |
| Zeway | Jimma |

January 2011 – Planned

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Tikura Wuha | Makesegnit |
| Wonji | Finoteselam |

Given the time required to assess IPs, land and water constraints, and build relationships with the local government, the Program will only undertake two additional grant cycles — one in January/February 2011 with gardeners graduating in February 2012 and one in July/August 2011 with gardeners graduating in July 2012. This will allow two new groups of beneficiaries to complete a minimum of one year with the garden program. As in previous grant solicitation periods, sensitization workshops will continue to be held for interested grant applicants in advance of the proposal submission period. One will be held on November 19, 2010 and a second workshop in July, 2011. These meetings provide time for interested NGOs to learn more about the program and provide expectations for implementation should the organization be awarded a grant.

In terms of location, USAID Urban Gardens will plan expansion in some of its current operational sites including Debre Markos, Woldiya, Assosa, Kombolcha, Woliso and Zeway. In addition, the Program will expand to Tikura Wuha in the south and to Wonji, Makesegnit and Finoteselam, places where we have committed mayors who will assist with land and water access issues.

Given the increasing geographic expansion of the program, the Urban Gardens Program will be decentralizing its management structure, managing local operations through two cluster coordinators located in Bahir Dar and Adama. Although the cluster coordinator will have an office from which to work, cluster coordinators will spend more than 50% of the time traveling and supervising sites in their region. These cluster coordinators will provide regular supervision of the OACs and monitor the activities of the IPs, providing a link between the regional field operations and the Addis Ababa office. This decentralized approach will allow for more direct

² This includes new grants that were signed in August 2010.

monitoring of gardens, IPs and OACs and will allow the project to troubleshoot problems quicker.

1.3 FORMALIZE PARTNERSHIP WITH IPS THROUGH GRANTS

The grant making process will remain the same, with the exception of the review process which will be managed by the Addis Ababa office. In order to ensure unbiased review of the grant proposals, the names of the NGOs will be removed from the proposal for the review process and the proposal will be judged solely on its own merit. In addition, the project will evaluate the selection criteria used to select IPs from last year. These selection criteria included:

- Interest in collaboration with other organizations;
- Experience working with HIV/AIDS and agriculture;
- Licensed by the government;
- Strong reputation with government and local communities;
- Prior experience managing funds from multiple donors;
- Experience in creating sustainable gardens;
- Good financial systems and ability/capacity to reach at least 200 households with 600 OVC;
- Ability and willingness to work with USAID Urban Gardens to solve critical problems around land and water; and
- Willingness and ability to work with both group and school gardens.

These criteria may be modified as needed to strengthen the program, allowing poor performing IPs to be dropped and new innovative IPs to be brought into the program. In addition, the program will review the criteria for beneficiary selection.

For new grant cycles, the project puts forth a request for grant applications followed by a sensitization meeting for all interested applicants. Interested existing partner NGOs and prospective NGOs will be invited to submit grant proposals to the USAID Urban Gardens Program. For the next planned grant cycle (January 2011), the request for application was released in October, followed by a sensitization meeting in November. Grant proposals are due to the program by December 20, 2010. A team of USAID Urban Gardens Program staff members in Addis Ababa will review all proposals and identify the top IPs to be recipients of new grants. For this coming cycle, the USAID Urban Gardens Program expects to make grant awards to 9 IPs in January 2011.

Like grants made in previous years, the project will provide both cash and in-kind support (equipment and other inputs). In terms of cash grants, USAID Urban Gardens Program informed IPs during the August 2010 grant cycle that the grant could support additional IP staff, specifically community mobilizers and assistant extension officers, who would manage the growing needs of the program. These staff will be trained along with extension officers in each new grant cycle.

In terms of in-kind grants, the USAID Urban Gardens Program has expanded the types of in-kind grants available to beneficiaries. In-kind grants cover not only drip irrigation systems but also various models of water pumps, water harvesting equipment and other water related equipment as identified in a needs assessment completed by USAID UGP staff during the initial

months of each grant cycle. When feasible and cost-effective, these inputs are purchased locally rather than in Addis Ababa.

Additionally, in 2010 and 2011 the project has reserved funds for digging between seven and ten shallow wells. This work will be completed in conjunction with local consultants and drilling companies selected through a competitive process. Recipient sites will be identified after the program's Environmental Resource Advisor, Goshu Worku, completes small amendments to the project's Initial Environmental Examination (IEE). Note: the cost of these wells will be covered directly from the program's project activities budget and not through the in-kind grants.

1.4 MONITOR GRANTS

Cluster offices in Bahir Dar and Adama (to be opened by December 2010) will have primary responsibility and oversight of garden activities in their regions. The cluster coordinator will be responsible for working with OACs to certify completion of deliverables by IPs in order to facilitate prompt quarterly payments. Each cluster coordinator will also be responsible for ensuring there is sufficient experience sharing and capacity building of IPs by working closely with OACs and IPs to facilitate periodic meetings and larger group trainings.

1.5 LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT

1.5.1 Continue Employment of Different Environmental Activities in New Gardens

Through the first two years of operation, the USAID Urban Gardens program has developed a range of mitigation measures to address water and soil contamination, long term water access, crop selection and other environmental concerns. A holistic risk assessment process, including water and soil testing, has been and will continue to be employed under the direction of the Environmental Resource Advisor (ERA) to identify environmental impacts. Each site will also establish water resources appropriate to the site based on assessments done by the ERA, senior technical advisor and site-specific OACs and extension officers. In most cases multiple water sources, including wells, water harvesting and municipal water will be employed to address water needs in all seasons.

1.5.2 Provide Ongoing Support to Gardens

The program will continue to provide technical support in all areas related to garden management and associated environmental issues including soil fertility, pest control, irrigation/water issues, crop selection, nursery management and upkeep practices. Earlier in the year the Program worked with consultant Thomas Cole to develop the Weekly Dialogue Tool, a compact guide for OACs and EOs to use during each garden visit. The tool helps line staff to facilitate discussions with gardeners regarding the status of their gardens, and will be used to reinforce the correct methods for preparing compost and improving soil fertility among other basic garden related issues. The "walk and talk" approach will be used by EOs with beneficiaries. All of the key topics for gardening are included in the Weekly Dialogue tool and each EO and OAC has key reference materials to refer to when necessary. Side-by-side learning using participatory approaches based on the FAO's Farmer Field School methods is promoted for all technical learning.

1.5.3 Expand Knowledge of Environmental Practices, Technologies, Services and Vendors

The USAID Urban Gardens Program's ERA is the frontline of the Program's work with on environmental issues and activities. He provides direct assistance to field staff, gardeners and extension officers with environmental issues including the testing of soil and water for contaminants, identifying appropriate water resources for the specific environment, addressing

waste water, irrigation, and other water issues, and general compliance with USAID's environmental regulations. Additionally, the ERA will undertake a mapping of local environmental, agricultural and related resources. This information will be made available to the IPs and will form the basis of a program that will map, using geospatial information systems (GIS) resources, land and water constraints for the program (and ultimately for the government). DAI will coordinate and collaborate with the International Rescue Committee who is currently engaged in a variety of GIS related activities for USAID/Ethiopia.

The ERA will test various value added water and environmental technologies for the gardens such as effective micro organism technologies as low cost methods of addressing waste and composting. Tests will be implemented in conjunction with a local company in Debre Zeit, which has test gardens in that region. As tests are completed and deemed successful, the ERA will assess strategies for scale up to a larger group, including training OACs and EOs in the methodology.

Additionally, the ERA will continue to collaborate with the school environmental clubs who help implement the school-based gardens. The USAID Urban Gardens Program led by the ERA will use this entry point to strengthen environmental education for students and work with schools to ensure that the gardens in the schools are environmentally appropriate.

1.5.4 Undertake Environmental Compliance and Reporting

To remain in compliance with 22 CFR 216 regulations, the USAID Urban Gardens Program will continue to report and liaise with the USAID Office of Environment and Natural Resources to ensure new environmental issues are addressed in accordance with US policy and to improved impact for garden beneficiaries. The environmental management plan and associated reporting mechanisms will be simplified by the ERA and implemented by the EOs and OACs. Reporting on environmental compliance is currently and will continue to be enforced by the USAID UGP.

COMPONENT 2: INTEGRATION OF HEALTH INTO GARDENING PROGRAM

2.1 TRAIN AND ORIENT COMMUNITY MOBILIZERS ON CREATING HEALTH LINKAGES AND DISCUSSIONS GROUPS

Group discussions are the means for sharing information and training beneficiaries in health. Facilitation skills are essential for ensuring that the discussion groups are effective in engaging the beneficiaries in the discussions. With good facilitation the information learned in discussion groups will be sustained. Facilitation skills require reinforcement and follow up refresher trainings on garden sites with beneficiaries.

2.2 MAP HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Under the lead of the Health Integration Officer, OACs and EOs will map all health services available in the local areas. This will include HAPCO offices, health clinics, VCT and ART clinics, donor funded nutrition or HIV care and support programs, maternal child health or reproductive health services, PEPFAR programs and other health services that are available. The mapping will be done in collaboration with local providers and beneficiaries and EOs.

2.3 EXPAND REFERRALS AND NETWORKS

Urban Health Extension Workers (HEWs) are being trained through a government program and will be critical linkages for the Program beneficiaries. HEWs will provide outreach to communities and provide nutrition and other health information through discussion groups. The referral system currently uses referral cards and all IP staff will be trained in using the cards and to make appropriate and effective referrals.

To the extent possible, the USAID Urban Gardens Program will work with local government and health partners try to address constraints, remove the bottlenecks so that more referrals results in successful access of needed health services.

Another benefit of the linkage is to identify PEPFAR and other HIV service providers interested in receiving training on gardening and micro-gardening as both an income generating activity for their beneficiaries but also as a means to improve nutrition. The USAID Urban Gardens Program will develop and invite these new partners to trainings and group discussions held through-out the year.

Finally, the partnership and linkages to these health organizations and services will also allow the Urban Gardens Program to develop lists of local experts from government and NGOs that can serve as resources for discussion groups.

2.4 FACILITATE GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The USAID Urban Gardens Program hosts regularly scheduled group discussions with group and school garden beneficiaries. These discussion groups are an extension of a side by side learning approach and are especially effective with people who have little time for formal trainings. While many of these informal discussions may be around gardening topics such as agricultural practices, composting preparation or how to manage water resources, the USAID Urban Gardens Program also schedules health topics into the discussion group meetings with beneficiaries.

Linkages with local health partners allow for these discussions to have relevant health agenda, with discussions facilitated by trained health practitioners who can communicate appropriate and factual information about the topic. These topics may include issues related to nutrition, ART use, and caring for sick individuals but may also be related to family planning, child health services and other appropriate information. Topics will be identified by operational area coordinators and extension workers and scheduled regularly with beneficiaries, along with appropriate behavior change communication (BCC) materials. The USAID Urban Gardens Program, through the leadership of the Health Integration Specialist, will strengthen and improve guidelines for these discussion groups and will include appropriate follow up mechanisms.

Finally, from time to time, the project will hold focus group discussions to evaluate the effectiveness and usefulness of these group discussions by beneficiaries. These focus groups will help to refine and improve the role and resources that the project puts towards the beneficiaries.

2.5 CONTINUE TO MANAGE AND BUILD PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

2.5.1 Partnership with JHU Mother Support Groups in Assosa

In Quarter 1 of FY 2011, the USAID UGP will review the work of the first year of partnership with the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) implemented by the Technical Support for the Ethiopian HIV/AIDS ART Initiative (TSEHAI) and renew the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The first year results will be shared at the annual meeting on November 15, 2010. Both the Program and JHU will continue to review the implementation strategies and results and plan to develop them into a case study or research paper.

2.5.2 Partnership with PATH's Infant and Young Child Nutrition Program (IYCN)

In July 2010, the USAID Urban Gardens Program and IYCN signed an MOU to develop approaches to ensure nutrition education is integrated into pilot areas through IYCN's trained health extension workers. USAID UGP will monitor and track results over the coming year, adjusting the MOU as needed at the mid way point in early calendar year 2011.

2.5.3 Partnerships with WFP, Land O'Lakes and Food by Prescription

In 2010, the USAID Urban Gardens Program signed a variety of other MOUs to improve partnerships and linkages in its program areas. These include MOUs with the World Food Programme (WFP) and Food by Prescription which ensure mutual referral. Progress continues to be tracked by the USAID Urban Gardens Program staff and the MOUs will be evaluated and extended annually. The Program also continues to work with Land O' Lakes informally and may consider a formalization of this partnership down the line.

2.5.4 Undertake Training in Food Preparation and Preservation Techniques

Proper food preparation and preservation techniques can be used to ensure that the nutritional values of the vegetables are maintained in the process and are then consumed in a more nutritious form. To date, USAID UGP has done some small training courses in this area, but in 2011 will identify local resources that can be tapped for additional training and demonstrations in food preparation and preservation. To the extent possible, trainings will be conducted at garden sites, as well as shared at field fairs and in other public venues in which beneficiaries are able to participate. When possible, the USAID UGP will work with identified partners in nutrition such as IYCN to assist with content and ensure wider participation in the trainings and demonstrations.

COMPONENT 3: BUILDING THE CAPACITY AND KNOWLEDGE OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

3.1 CAPACITY BUILDING FOR EOS AND CMS

As previously mentioned, the USAID UGP developed the first edition of the Weekly Dialogue Tools. In Year 3 the tools will be tested and adapted based on the results of field tests. Once they are finalized they will be translated into Amharic and distributed to all IPs. All EOs, CMs and OACs will be trained in the use of the tools and the reference materials, and they will be monitored and supported in their use over the year.

3.2 CAPACITY BUILDING FOR IPS FINANCE MANAGERS AND DIRECTORS

Over the past two years there have been numerous challenges in ensuring the quality of financial reporting and compliance with USAID regulations by IPs. To ensure higher quality financial and other reporting and improved relationships between the project and the IPS, all IPs will participate in an orientation that will cover the basic components of financial management, reporting, USG regulations and compliance. Additionally, the finance team will conduct field visits in conjunction with quarterly meetings to ensure the IP understanding of operations and finance and clarity of roles. Individual support will also be provided as needed.

3.3 EXPANDING CAPACITY AND QUALITY OF SCHOOL BASED GARDENS

School gardens have been an essential component of reaching OVC in large numbers. Many of the schools that participate in the USAID Urban Gardens Program matriculate between 500 and 2,000 OVC, and thus, the schools serve as an important venue for learning and impact. Over the course of its two years working in these schools, the Program has learned how critical effective environmental clubs and schools principals can be to the success and long term viability of the gardens. However, in some places there has been high turnover of principals, making the sustainability of gardens challenging.

In Year 3, the USAID UGP will hire a capacity building/OVC technical adviser to ensure that there is a consistent and systematic approach to working with OVC in the school environment. This expert will work closely with the schools and the education bureaus to facilitate and improve the integration of gardens into schools and to ensure the long lasting support of gardens for OVC by school management.

As an initial activity among hiring, the OVC school advisor will conduct an assessment of the school based gardens and develop suggestions for improvement in the approach. Currently a fraction of the OVC in a school is served due to the amount of land and water available. The OVC school advisor will work closely with the Program technical advisors to help expand the micro-gardening to reach as many OVC as possible and to help integrate the gardening into the curriculum and build a lasting support for gardens in the schools. A linkage between elementary and secondary schools will also be developed so that students graduating from elementary school can continue gardening in secondary school. Currently when students graduate from elementary school there is no guarantee that they will be able to garden in secondary school. The OVC school advisor will build relationships with principals, school committees and education offices to strengthen the importance of gardening skills in elementary and secondary schools.

3.3.1 Scale Up Micro-gardening Technology

Micro-gardens through the use of grow bags and other small containers are an effective means for expanding gardening that require little space and use little water. Through micro-gardens USAID UGP will be able to reach a larger number of OVC students in schools, particularly in places where the garden plots cannot accommodate larger numbers. Specific guidelines for the development of micro gardens in schools will be developed by the OVC technical adviser in collaboration with other UGP technical staff. Basic information about the creation and maintenance of micro gardens is included in the Weekly Dialogue tools. Cost effective and locally procured materials will be used to ensure the sustainability of the use of this method of gardening in the local areas.

3.4 EXPANDING BACKYARD POULTRY

Based on recommendations provided in the 2010 consultancy report of Dr. Alders, the Program will hire a Poultry and Livestock expert to oversee and manage the poultry and small ruminant program. This individual will be responsible for ensuring a high quality program and improving the ability of beneficiaries to manage the addition of animals to their gardens. This new Poultry and Livestock expert will oversee all activities in this area, ensuring that issues related to health, hygiene, disease and feed — areas where the Urban Gardens Program in the past had some weakness -- are addressed. Given that public health aspects are of particular significance when addressing the needs of HIV-affected households, this specialist will ensure that USAID Urban Gardens Program beneficiaries are meeting World Health Organization guidelines for raising backyard poultry. Poultry will continue to be provided to 5,000 households based on the previously accepted criteria (ability to care for chickens, construction of a chicken coop, completion of training, demonstrated ability to make/provide feed, demonstrated knowledge of good public health/veterinary practices). The Poultry and Livestock Expert will monitor the progress of the poultry program and provide guidance to meet and address challenges.

3.5 PILOT SMALL RUMINANT ACTIVITIES

In addition to poultry, the Poultry and Livestock Expert will assess the possibility of adding other small ruminants such as sheep and goats to the program. As with the poultry program, criteria will be developed in advance and will be the basis by which beneficiaries are selected. Not all beneficiaries will automatically receive sheep or goats.

The livestock expert will also assess possible areas to institute the small ruminant pilot project. Guidelines will be developed that include selection criteria for beneficiaries and environmental plans for addressing waste, water and other issues related to care of small ruminants. Using the criteria for selection of areas and beneficiaries, the livestock will be distributed to selected beneficiaries and the progress will be monitored by the livestock expert.

3.6 EXPAND PLANTING OF FRUIT TREES

Fruit trees have been a part of the USAID Urban Gardens program since the beginning. However, there have been challenges as fruit trees require proper care and monitoring. In some instance trees were not properly grafted and thus, will never bear fruit. In an effort to remove these and other impediments, the Program will develop new guidelines and criteria for selection of sites for fruit trees. Most fruit trees will be part of group or school gardens rather than in individual households. Training will be provided by local specialists and a management plan will be developed and monitored by cluster coordinators and OACs.

COMPONENT 4: BUILD INCOME GENERATION POTENTIAL

4.1 ORGANIZE TRAINING ON BASICS OF MARKETING AND MARKETING SKILL

During the spring of 2010, Adam Tekeste was hired as the project's Financial and Enterprise Specialist (FES). As a starting point to new activities in this area he undertook a system wide review of existing finance and business skills being provided by Program Partner IPs to understand what existed, what the gaps are and where the USAID Urban Gardens Program could assist in filling gaps and rolling out a more systematic approach to savings and financial services, business training and marketing. During 2011 and 2012 many more training activities will be rolled out in this area, working in conjunction with the organization WISE.

4.2 IDENTIFY MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Building the understanding of gardeners of the market, its dynamics and how to buy and sell into it will be a key focus going forward. This means understanding how to identify new opportunities in the market (for example, growing kale versus tomatoes because it captures a higher price) and how to assess changes in the market (such as price fluctuations during peak growing seasons or alternatively in the rainy season). The FES in conjunction with other staff members will undertake a variety of activities to improve the understanding of IPs, their EOs and CMs, and gardeners of market dynamics. The FES will start by developing practical guidelines for IPs and beneficiaries on how to conduct market research and assess local markets into which vegetables can be marketed and sold. These guidelines will serve as a tool for EOs in day to day learning with beneficiaries.

The FES will also work with gardeners to gain greater understanding of the economics behind their gardens, specifically mentoring on which vegetables to grow at which time to yield the best market price. Part of this training will involve setting up market information boards in community and school gardens that provide gardeners with up to date information on what prices specific vegetables are capturing in the local market. This small step will help them think more strategically about how and when to market vegetables, and in the case of OVC, will also help them overcome issues with the school community which has expected them to sell their vegetables to staff at lower than market prices.

Finally, the FES with help from strategic short term consultants will help develop training and capacity building programs for gardeners that address more advanced market issues, such as activities in post harvest activities that add value to the crops being grown and then processes. These could be simply techniques for washing, storing and preserving vegetables, or may include other activities that refine, process or package vegetables.

4.3 EXPAND MARKET ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES

4.3.1 Hold Field Fairs and Vegetable Days

One basic mechanism for improving the sale and knowledge of the program is through field fairs. Field fairs have served multiple purposes: First, they allowed the program to highlight its contributions to the community and to highlight the contributions of local government, breaking down stigma and recognizing beneficiaries as gardeners, not just people living with HIV/AIDS. Second, they allowed beneficiaries to promote and sell vegetables produced in the gardens. Third they allowed the project to promote discussions of nutrition along with cooking demonstrations, and finally, they allowed local agencies and private companies engaged in

selling or promoting agricultural technologies to share new information with the beneficiaries and the communities on everything from new irrigation systems, low technology water pumps, new or improved seed varieties and also on how to prepare nutritious foods.

In Year 3, field fairs will be organized in collaboration with local governments in all the operational areas in April or May, prior to rainy season. The guidelines for field fairs will be updated and will include building on already scheduled events. Field fairs will be organized in close collaboration with local governments, encouraging leadership by local officials. The project will continue to work with mayors and other government agencies to ensure that the fairs are in central areas for maximum exposure for beneficiary sales, and awareness-raising to the communities.

4.3.2 Pilot Vegetable Marketing Shops

Vegetable markets at schools and near group gardens will be developed in collaboration with local government. Marketing groups or more formalized associations or cooperatives will be established linking gardeners to customers and encouraging competitive prices for gardeners. Specific criteria will be determined by the FES and other members of the USAID Urban Gardens Program technical team. Selected beneficiaries will be trained to be part of market management committees through a combination of training of trainers methodology with experienced extension officer and direct training of qualified beneficiaries.

4.4 EXPAND GARDENERS' FINANCIAL LITERACY AND ACCESS THROUGH GROUP SAVINGS AND LOANS

The original USAID Urban Gardens Program envisioned DAI developing and facilitating informal savings and loan groups with its program beneficiaries. There are a number of beneficiaries already participating and benefiting from existing groups that may be facilitated by partner IPs or by other local entities. To avoid “re-creating the wheel” or duplicating local efforts already going on with program beneficiaries, the USAID Urban Gardens Program, led by the Finance and Enterprise specialist, will focus on improving best practices around the facilitation of informal group savings and loan (GSL) groups.

The purpose of GSL groups is to help groups of individuals build economic security through small savings, gain experience with micro loans (made from the mobilized savings of group members), and provide members with new knowledge and experience in financial management, leadership, democratic processes and governance that boosts confidence and empowers individuals to be more self sufficient. GSLs are meant to be autonomous, self capitalized, self managing and should continue beyond the life of the USAID Urban Gardens Program so long as they continue to be valuable and useful to their members.

In other instances, GSLs may transform into more formal entities such as credit cooperatives or members may seek other financial service solutions from other more formalized entities that are able to provide longer term and larger sums for a variety of purposes. Irrespective of whether they remain or change, VSLs provide a good foundation for any vulnerable community to begin to build its own safety net using their own savings. They are a recommended tool for working with vulnerable communities where people cannot and are not expected to save large sums of money and are too vulnerable to risk taking on debt. GSLs provide a trusted platform for its members to gradually save, build experience with loans and learn basic financial, management and business skills which can be stepping stones to future activities.

The USAID Urban Gardens Program hired the FES in May and working together with a consultant from DAI they conducted an early evaluation of all partner IP GSL programs,

assessing how many program beneficiaries are currently engaged in the activity, whether the GSLs are functioning properly, whether they have outside capitalization (a common practice in Ethiopia, but not considered best practice by international standards), and what weaknesses can be easily addressed with additional training and coaching.

One partner in Addis Ababa, PICDO has adapted CRS GSL methodology (called SILC). This methodology is being shared with other implementing partners at the annual meeting along with discussion about how to initiate this method and others. Savings boxes have been purchased and a plan to strengthen existing GSLAs and add new ones will begin in January.

In August and September GSL aspects were also added to the Weekly Dialogue tool. These are being tested and will be revised and translated later in Year 3. Additional work may also need to be undertaken to standardize or harmonize practices to the extent possible.

Additionally, another area of activity for the USAID Urban Gardens Program's FES will be to evaluate and further refine a financial education program focused on improving financial literacy. This endeavor will be done in conjunction with the local NGO, WISE. Experience with illiterate and semi-literate populations has shown that knowledge of financial terminology, financial products and services is weaker without the experience or formal education. Basic business skills will be shared with EOs and OACs through trainings organized with WISE in Addis Ababa, Debre Zeit, and Hawassa.

Going forward, the FES will also continue to look closely at how GSLs are being used with youth and OVC groups, evaluating their ability to meet other needs specific to a youth audience such as additional need to expand financial literacy and understanding of money, money management, asset accumulation, etc.

COMPONENT 5: ENSURE GREATER SELF SUFFICIENCY FOR GARDENERS AND PROMOTE EXPERT SKILLS

5.1 WORK WITH EXTENSION OFFICERS TO PREPARE BENEFICIARIES FOR POST-GRANT PERIOD

In Year 3, the USAID Urban Gardens Program will continue to design and refine activities that focus on building the self sufficiency of beneficiaries. While the intention is to prepare beneficiaries for this transition prior to the end of the year long grant, the project is also prepared to work with beneficiaries in the post-grant period, continuing to mentor them in gardening activities, skills and knowledge and improving their ability to formalize and operate without outside assistance.

Key to preparing beneficiaries for the post grant period will be setting expectations with IPs and beneficiaries about the goals of the program, the end date of the grant and the expectations of beneficiaries during the grant period. This should be done from the start with a specific focus in months nine and ten in initiating group conversations about how the coming harvest year and about the goals of the group vis-à-vis gardening and their commitment to it. Setting the tone from the beginning and reinforcing messages, as well as skills and messaging will be critical to ensuring that beneficiaries buy into the process.

Some groups will be well prepared for the end of formal assistance from the USAID Urban Gardens Program. Some gardening groups (particularly community gardens) will be well organized, confident, and entrepreneurial in their approach to the gardens and to using the skills they have developed; this will allow for a smoother transition and greater likelihood at self sufficiency. Program staff, specifically OACs and EOs, will assess interest of groups in formalizing into produce associations/cooperatives. Where feasible, OACs and EOs will work with selected groups who have both the interest and ability to formalize. This may mean registering with the government as a cooperative, and linking into associations of cooperatives. Once established, these cooperatives may have other additional needs. The USAID Urban Gardens Program will facilitate introduction with government agricultural extension officers, to input suppliers and to more formal sources of finance, such as microfinance institutions or savings and credit cooperatives.

5.2 REVIEW LAND ACCESS ISSUES FOR SOON TO BE GRADUATES

The first nine months of work with beneficiaries will consist of daily and weekly technical support from Eos and OACs. During the last 3 months of the program with the beneficiaries, there will be less technical support but increased linkages with the government to ensure land security and water access. The outcome evaluation from year two pointed out that most beneficiaries continued gardening individually rather than groups. Land and water access are critical for group, school and individual gardens. Regular meetings with mayors and other government officials as well as formalized MOUs (described in section 1.1) will be part of the ensuring access to land and water.

5.3 SUPPORT URBAN AGRICULTURE POLICY WORK

Following the USAID Urban Gardens Program's annual conference held in November 2009 in Addis Ababa, much enthusiasm has been mounting in working toward a more formalized urban agriculture policy for the city. In July 2010, the Program has begun work to support the

government in the development of this policy. With the demands of the expansion and addition of funds it is suggested that Dr. Andy Bradford work together with Dr. Mandefo Negussie, and the City Bureau for Urban Agriculture in Addis Ababa to push forward with a new policy. Dr. Bradford will facilitate a stakeholders meeting in late November to move this process forward. Following the stakeholders meeting in November, the Urban Gardens Program through Dr. Negussie will continue to support the policy process, organizing at least two meetings per year to share results with mayors in other cities. DAI stands ready to provide support in the form of other local and international consultants as needed to develop the process and support the stakeholders in developing, finalizing, and rolling out a new law.

COMPONENT 6: EXPAND THE LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING OF LINKING GARDENING TO IMPROVED HEALTH OUTCOMES

The USAID Urban Gardens Program is committed to understanding and documenting its impact on HIV/AIDS affected beneficiaries as well as sharing best practices, lessons learned and successes with the global health and development communities. Component six focuses on aggregating the information and disseminating to a variety of audiences.

6.1 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The results of the outcome evaluation conducted by FHI in July 2010 will be presented at the annual meeting on November 15, 2010. The IP heads, IP staff and USAID Urban Gardens Program staff will develop lessons learned, identify gaps and the way forward in order to enhance the work plan and use the valuable data from the evaluation.

Dropouts remain a challenge going into Year 3 and new recording forms are being developed to track dropouts and the reasons for dropping out. The Program will use the information gleaned from this reporting to improve support to existing beneficiaries to mitigate future dropouts.

A baseline of the new garden sites will be conducted in January 2011 to be followed up the following December 2011. Alternatively, for the beneficiaries registered in January and August, 2010, the registration forms will be used for a different type of baseline and outcome survey. This is a pilot to see how much change can be observed just from registration forms in the categories of HIV testing, savings and loans and school attendance.

Additionally, the Program will be working with Tufts University's Feinstein Center to plan, prepare, and execute a full participatory impact assessment. Tufts has proposed an initial, qualitative exploratory study (scoping study) to examine how best to measure well-being, in a broad sense, among project participants. This study would focus on social aspects of HIV/AIDS, issues of stigma and social isolation, and the ways in which program participants describe and prioritize these issues. The scoping study would also examine ways to measure the social dynamics of UGP groups, the pros and cons of group membership, and the ways in which participants describe the qualitative benefits of gardening (if any) as an activity.

The scoping study would use mainly informal interview methods with groups and individuals, combined with visits to gardens. The study will focus on garden groups which have been in existent for the longest period of time, as these groups will have the most experience to share. This approach means a focus on the first UGP areas viz. Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Adama, Gondar, Dessie and Bahir Dar (six areas). As such, the scoping study is not intended to be representative of the entire UGP, but, will be representative of the first sites where the UGP was established.

The design of the participatory impact assessment (PIA) would draw heavily on the findings of the scoping study. Using participatory methods such as informal structured interviews, timelines (to clarify group and individual histories), and ranking and scoring methods (to compare different benefits and factors which contribute to those benefits) the PIA will attempt to answer questions about nutrition, sustainability, and social benefits from gardening. Methods such as SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis might also be used with groups to analyze the support provided by the program, and the risks (e.g. access to land) and opportunities (e.g. growing markets) for gardening in the absence of program support.

6.2 ENSURE QUALITY DATA AND IMPROVE EOS SKILL

A new monitoring and evaluation advisor was hired by FHI in October. She will be supported by FHI staff in the Addis Ababa office. FHI will ensure that quarterly, semi-annual and annual reports are completed on time. There will also be training provided at cluster level – in the north and south on maintaining data and reporting.

6.3 HOLD ANNUAL MEETING

In 2009 The USAID UGP hosted a conference on urban agriculture that was attended by 300 people. In Year 3 it was decided that it would be good to hold an internal annual meeting, with all staff and IPs in attendance. This is particularly appropriate since an outcome evaluation was conducted in July 2010 and the report was finalized in October 2010. The first day of the meeting will be used to present the data and results, and to prepare a plan on how to use it for programming in Year 3. The meeting will be held in the Ghion Hotel and will address operations issues as well as program review and data dissemination.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

As the program moves into Year 3 with additional money and the hiring of new staff, systems are being strengthened to ensure efficient and effective management of the program. Currently, revisions to the existing operations, personnel, and grants manuals are being established to ensure compliance with USAID and DAI rules and regulations. The Addis Ababa office will be remodeled and new satellite offices will be established in Bahir Dar and Adama

Staff management will include quarterly meetings with OACs, periodic site visits to field by cluster coordinators, and biannual cluster meetings. At the Addis Ababa level there will be bi-monthly management meetings and weekly staff meetings, in which field staff will be encouraged to contribute.

The project will also continue hold quarterly meetings with Implementing Partners and appropriate government focal persons in all the operational areas. These meetings will also allow for open dialogue and sharing of lessons learned and best practices. Cluster coordinators will meet with IPs regularly to encourage and monitor participation.

ADDITIONAL STAFF AND INCREASED STTA TO MEET NEEDS OF BENEFICIARIES

Over the past two years the program has learned that more technical support is needed to meet the multiple needs of the program beneficiaries and to properly monitor outcomes and results. With the planned expansion, DAI proposed adding staff members to improve the quality of the program, strengthen the technical knowledge of beneficiaries, improve oversight and share impact results. Specifically, we are in the process of hiring the following new staff members:

- Three additional Operational Area Coordinators who will oversee, train and mentor IP extension officers. These individuals will be located in either the new cities or existing cities where excess capacity is identified.
- A Poultry and Livestock Expert to manage an expanded poultry and ruminants program;
- An OVC/Schools Adviser to address the capacity issues in schools and to maximize results related to the needs of youth and children;
- A Director of Finance and Administration that oversees the increasing size of procurement and quantity of procurements made on behalf of the program.
- Two Cluster Coordinators to manage two regional cluster offices, one in Bahir Dar and one in Adama to improve capacity building of local implementing partners and oversee regional activities.

Below are short descriptions of each position.

Operational Area Coordinators

OACs are the Urban Gardens Program's front line staff. They work directly with the IPs, EOs, mayors, health extension workers and the community to ensure the program works. We will hire 3 additional OACs to be located in new cities or in sites where additional resources are required. As done previously, the OACs will manage on-the-job training and mentoring, will engage IPs on technical and other logistical issues and will liaise with community mobilizers hired by the IPs on issues related to the health integration / health discussion groups.

Poultry and Livestock Expert

As noted above, the 2010 report of Dr. Alders recommended the hiring of a poultry specialist to oversee and manage the program, ensure a high quality programming and guarantee beneficiaries are able to manage the addition of animals to their gardens. This new poultry and livestock expert will oversee and ensure a quality program that would address issues of health, hygiene, disease and feed — areas where the Urban Gardens Program in the past had some weakness. Given that public health aspects are of particular significance when addressing the needs of HIV-affected households, this specialist will ensure that Urban Gardens Program beneficiaries are meeting WHO guidelines.

OVC/Schools Adviser

Working with youth and OVC requires special skills and specialized knowledge of school systems. When the program began in 2008, it did not initially anticipate the great acceleration that would be done through schools. Our experience has shown that the work with schools has demonstrated new challenges and new opportunities. For example, often the land provided by a school is insufficient to reach all of the OVC in a school. In order to meet the needs of OVC beneficiaries both within and outside of school, we propose the hiring of an OVC/School specialist to address the special needs of youth. This expert will oversee the expanded micro gardening program, help to develop strategies to ensure partnerships with schools, develop and implement additional training methodologies, work with the FES to ensure that savings and marketing programs are appropriate for youth and children, and recommend other special approaches that may be needed to ensure that OVC are adequately served by the gardens.

Director of Finance and Administration

The Director of Finance and Administration will oversee the expanded operations and administration of the program, ensuring compliance with all USAID rules and regulations and ensuring the smooth operations of our grants management, finance, procurement, subcontracting and consultant management activities. The position will be critical to making sure that the funds are used and accounted for properly and that all program needs are met in a timely manner. The Director of Finance and Administration will oversee the planned decentralization of procurement and distribution. He/she will need to operate at a high level and very proactively with the technical staff. A junior logistics/ procurement officer will be hired or promoted from existing staff to oversee all transportation, and procurement, working with the staff in all cities and clusters.

Cluster Coordinator

Each Cluster Coordinator will be responsible for organizing activities in one region—north or south — to bring technical support closer to regional field operations, improve communications with and capacity building of implementing partners and program beneficiaries, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the program. The Cluster Coordinators will supervise and hold regular meetings with all OACs in their region to assess progress of garden creation and implementation. He or she will be available to troubleshoot issues related to the gardens or relationships with IPs as they arise. It is possible that DAI will promote two senior and experienced OACs to this role, however recruitment will be full and open and the best candidate will be offered the position.

KEY SHORT TERM CONSULTANCIES FOR FIRST HALF OF YEAR 3:

In addition to the long term staff required to implement the program over the next two years, the Urban Gardens Program will require support from key local and international experts. Over the next six months, the Urban Gardens Program will be undertaking the following short term consultancies. Additional short term consultants are likely to be required and in March/April 2011 a revised plan will be sent to USAID.

Participatory Training and Gardening in Schools. In the past, the training of extension officers and garden beneficiaries has been done primarily through lecture and demonstration. In Year 3 the Urban Gardens Program will be testing, refining and rolling out participatory approaches developed in August 2010 by Thomas Cole, an urban agriculture consultant. Based on the FAO farmer training school methods, a weekly dialogue tool was developed and rolled out to extension officers through three regional five-day trainings in October. In December of Year 3, Mr. Cole will review the adoption of this observation led methodology for learning, review the progress of OACs in implementing this approach with EOs and will work to broaden the approach to new sites. The training tools will be further refined, translated and finalized by the end of Year 3. Similarly, Mr. Cole will also review the schools program to help EOs and OACs adopt more youth friendly approaches and maximize the relationships with the schools and the school environmental committee.

Government Partnerships and Urban Agriculture Policy. As the project strengthens relationships with government offices at the national and local levels are critical for sustainability. The program has begun work to support the government in the development of an urban agriculture policy. With the demands of the expansion and addition of funds it is suggested that Dr. Andy Bradford work together with Dr. Mandefo Negussie, the staff and the government to push forward with a new policy. Dr. Bradford will facilitate a stakeholders meeting in late November to move this process forward. In addition, these scopes will help foster and maintain relationships with city mayors, given their importance to accessing water and land. At least two meetings per year will be held with mayors of all cities — allowing us to share results and honor champion mayors.

Publications and Workshop Support. During the first two years of the program, a number of documents, studies, reports and success stories have been completed for the project. This includes existing and new training materials used by the project. To date little effort has been given to cataloguing and systematizing the materials or putting them out for public use. Additionally, some support is required to plan and hold upcoming training workshops and the program's annual meeting with implementing partners. Nicholas Parkinson, a former journalist with exceptional writing and organizational skills who currently living in Addis Ababa, is available to work with the project to take on these activities.

Facilitation Training. Ms. Tsigie Haile, a local consultant, will help integrate facilitation training techniques into technical updates and meetings with OACs. This will further enable the capacity building of IPs. Ms. Haile and her organization WISE will also be contracted to work with the program on business skills trainings and market research / assessment. Ms. Haile is well regarded in Ethiopia and has worked with the Program intermittently over the past two years.

Program Support. With plans to expand again in Year 3, it is necessary to bring in additional operations support from DAI home office for a minimum of three months to help with the new recruitment, the remodel of the office to accommodate new staff, grants review, modification and disbursement of new grant); the rationalization of admin and technical staff job descriptions and responsibilities so as to maximize efficiencies and make sure all the new responsibilities are covered; the further standardization and systemization of reporting, relationships and communication with implementing partners and audit of project outputs, deliverables and grant

funding. Specifically, we propose to engage Kate Ogorzaly to help with this ramp up period. She will relocate to Addis Ababa for up to 3 months. Additionally, Home Office Project Team Lead, Colleen Green, will also provide ongoing support during the ramp up period, some of it remotely and some in Addis Ababa if required. This work is especially critical given the scale and complexity of the Urban Gardens Program compared with other urban agriculture projects in Ethiopia or abroad.

Starting in late 2010, DAI research specialist Alyson Lipsky will help the program develop a more comprehensive M&E plan working with the new FHI sponsored M&E specialist. She will assist in improving reporting templates for IPs and provide support and research as the program emphasizes nutritional impacts of its activities. Ms. Lipsky's support is integral during a time when additional ramping up is happening and there is a need to research and identify local consultants to support the project for the next two years. Ms. Lipsky will provide two weeks of in-country support working directly with the M&E Specialist and will continue to be available on an as-needed basis from Washington.